

The Commonwealth of Old Pennsylvania by Dr. Lodge McCammon

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Verse 1:

Of the original 13, it's the one that didn't touch the sea
That was given away by Charles II to repay a debt of loyalty
But oh William Penn was embarrassed and did contend
Stating "people will think I named it after me"

Explanation of Verse 1:

Pennsylvania was one of the 13 original colonies and is the only one not touching the Atlantic Ocean.

In 1681 King Charles II granted a land charter to William Penn to repay a debt owed to William's father. Charles II called the land charter "Pennsylvania." William was embarrassed, worried that people would think that he named it after himself. He would have rather called it "New Wales" or "Sylvania." Charles II refused to change the name of the charter.

Chorus:

That Commonwealth of old Pennsylvania
Cradle of the revolution in the Keystone state
Liberty from Philadelphia any day now
Declare independence and a constitutional debate

Explanation of the Chorus:

Pennsylvania is officially called "The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania."

Pennsylvania is many times referred to as the Keystone State - due to the central role it played both politically and economically throughout American history.

Pennsylvania was where the founding fathers wrote both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution both in Philadelphia which could be called the cradle of the American revolution.

Verse 2:

The eastern border is 57 miles along the Delaware River
Go west you'll find in Harrisburg they like the Susquehanna much better
'Oer the ridges and valleys of the Appalachians to the Allegheny Plateau
Thinkin' south along the Mason-Dixon is the way to go

Explanation of Verse 2:

The eastern border of Pennsylvania is along the Delaware River, separating it from Delaware.

If you travel west into the state, not quite to the middle, you will arrive in Harrisburg, the capital. Harrisburg is on the Susquehanna River.

If you keep traveling west, you will cross the ridge and valley region of the Appalachian Mountains and you will eventually end up in the north/west region of state called the Allegheny Plateau.

The entire southern border of Pennsylvania is defined by the Mason-Dixon line.

Bridge:

There's mountain laurel under a branch of Eastern Hemlock
Whispering "virtue, liberty and independence"
"virtue, liberty and independence"
There's ruffed grouse that spreads its wings and flies away
Spreading, spreading virtue, liberty and independence
virtue, liberty and independence

Explanation of the Bridge:

State flower: Mountain Laurel

State tree: Eastern Hemlock

State motto: "Virtue, Liberty & Independence"

State bird: Ruffed Grouse

Verse 3:

Erie, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and Scranton
Define the four corners of PA manufacturing
Help build relations with the North
While fertile soil and Agriculture opened all the southern doors
Gave way to national banks, an innovative state for sure

Explanation of Verse 3:

The four corners of Pennsylvania are the four cities known for manufacturing. Erie (north/west), Pittsburgh (south/west), Scranton/Wilkes-Barre (north/east), and Philadelphia (south/east). These areas are known for industries such as steel, glass and chemicals.

In the early years of the country, the focus on industry and manufacturing helped strengthen the bond with the northern states.

Pennsylvania is also known for agriculture. They have been a major provider of crops such as mushrooms, apples, and trees.

In the early years of the country, this focus on agriculture helped strengthen the bond with the southern states.

Since they were a leader in both manufacturing and agriculture, it makes sense that they were also an innovative state when it came to commerce. Pennsylvania started the first nationally chartered bank to help state-state transactions and the growth of national wealth.